

**MINUTES OF THE
PRISON RELOCATION COMMISSION**

Wednesday, December 3, 2014 – 2:00 p.m. – Room 210 Senate Building

Members Present:

Sen. Jerry W. Stevenson, Senate Chair
Rep. Brad R. Wilson, House Chair
Sen. Karen Mayne
Sen. Evan J. Vickers
Rep. Gregory H. Hughes
Rep. Eric K. Hutchings
Rep. Mark A. Wheatley
Director Rollin Cook
Director Ron Gordon

Staff Present:

Mr. Brian J. Bean, Policy Analyst
Mr. Bryant R. Howe, Assistant Director
Mr. Robert H. Rees, Associate General Counsel
Ms. Sara J. Thomas, Legislative Secretary

Note: A list of others present, a copy of related materials, and an audio recording of the meeting can be found at www.le.utah.gov.

1. Committee Business

Chair Wilson called the meeting to order at 2:16 p.m.

MOTION: Sen. Stevenson moved to approve the minutes of the October 22, 2014, meeting. The motion passed unanimously. Rep. Hutchings and Mr. Gordon were absent for the vote.

2. Opening Remarks

Sen. Stevenson provided an overview of the prison relocation effort since the Legislature and the governor concluded, in the 2014 General Session, that it was in the best interests of the state to relocate the correctional facility currently in Draper. He displayed "Site Screening, Assessment, and Detailed Technical Evaluation Processes" and reviewed some of the major milestones in the site selection process, including the identification of 26 potential sites, the adoption of site selection criteria, and the screening and scoring of the potential sites using the adopted criteria. Sen. Stevenson explained that following the screening of the 26 potential sites, consultation with the Department of Corrections, and meetings with local officials in affected communities, six highly ranked sites will be recommended for further evaluation.

Chair Wilson emphasized that no attempt has been made by anyone associated with the commission to manipulate the screening scores in any way, stating that the scores were calculated by independent experts with many years of national experience in siting correctional facilities. He explained that the decision to delay public disclosure of the sites, their associated screening scores, and detailed information on the screening process was made at the request of state and local officials concerned about the impact that public disclosure would have on potential large-scale economic development projects of interest and potential benefit to the whole state. He remarked that the new prison must be located where it will retain and attract the highest caliber security, administrative, educational, medical, therapeutic, rehabilitation, and operations employees in order to enable it to operate efficiently at the taxpayer's expense.

3. Consultant Updates on Site Screening

Mr. Brad Sassatelli, MGT of America, Inc., introduced and thanked his team of consultants and turned the time over to Mr. Robert Nardi, Senior Vice President, Louis Berger Group, to present "Correctional Facility Siting – Status."

Mr. Nardi outlined the steps of the site selection process. He explained that the primary search area for prospective sites was Davis County, Weber County, Salt Lake County, northern Utah County, eastern Tooele County, and southeastern Box Elder County. He reviewed the siting criteria adopted by the commission at its September 3, 2014, meeting and explained that each of the 26 prospective sites was screened against these weighted criteria. Mr. Nardi informed the commission that MGT of America's site screening team was made up of urban and regional planners, civil engineers, environmental engineers, architects, environmental specialists, and geographic information systems specialists. He explained that no detailed field investigations were conducted during the screening process; rather, a variety of data sources were used to screen out obviously unsuitable sites. After briefly discussing how sites were identified, Mr. Nardi presented the results of the site screening process. He provided information on the following six highly ranked sites:

- Airport North (Salt Lake County)
- I-80/7200 West (Salt Lake County)
- Southwest Valley (Salt Lake County)
- SR 112/Depot Boundary Road (Tooele County)
- Northwest Utah Valley (Utah County)
- Lake Mountains West (Utah County)

Sen. Stevenson commented that the six highly ranked sites presently constitute the best sites submitted for consideration and noted that the commission is open to considering other sites that may yet be offered.

In response to a question from Rep. Hutchings, the commission discussed how local input will be taken into consideration in the further evaluation of the six highly ranked sites.

MOTION: Sen. Stevenson moved to endorse the recommendation of the chairs and consultants and approve the six highly ranked sites for further assessment as potential sites for a new correctional facility. The motion passed unanimously.

4. Proposed Assessment Criteria

Welcoming the members of the public in attendance, Rep. Hughes observed that this prison relocation effort has been much more transparent than the state's usual processes for acquiring land. He stated that the commission has been looking for a site with natural barriers to encroachment that would prevent the reoccurrence of the situation in Draper. However, he noted, proximity to medical facilities, courts, and a population base from which the new facility can draw employees and volunteers is also essential. He explained that the screening criteria adopted by the commission on September 3, 2014, have taken these matters into consideration and successfully screened out unsuitable sites. Rep. Hughes explained that, going forward, different guidelines need to be applied to the six highly ranked sites endorsed by the commission for further evaluation. He responded to questions from the commission regarding potential assessment guidelines.

MOTION: Rep. Hughes moved to adopt the following assessment guidelines for the six highly ranked sites undergoing further review:

- Have any issues been discovered with the site to date that would make the site unreasonably difficult or costly to develop?
- Is there an identified, compelling state interest that would likely be impaired by locating the correctional facility on the site being assessed?
- Is the proposed site in the path of expected concentrations of population growth and increasing population density that will likely occur in the foreseeable future?
- What is contemplated in the land use plan of the local community where the proposed site is located?

The motion passed unanimously.

5. Process Moving Forward

Mr. Bean explained that now that the commission has approved sites for further assessment and established guidelines under which those sites will be assessed, it can move forward to address public engagement in the site selection process.

Rep. Hutchings commented that having an engaged and receptive community is critical to having a successful corrections operation.

MOTION: Sen. Stevenson moved that the chairs be directed to formulate a public engagement plan and to present the plan for consideration at the next commission meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

Chair Wilson noted that the commission will meet again on December 22, 2014, at 2:00 p.m. to hear a report from MGT of America on the assessment of the six highly ranked sites and to present a public engagement plan.

6. Other Items/Adjourn

MOTION: Rep. Hutchings moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

Chair Wilson adjourned the meeting at 3:22 p.m.